

STUDIO ARTS FOUNDATIONS (ARTS 101-03)

Denison University, Spring 2014
T/TH 8:30-10:20am @ Bryant 309

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“Screwing things up is a virtue. Being correct is never the point. Being right can stop all the momentum of a very interesting idea.”

– Robert Rauschenberg

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Directed at both non-art majors and minors, Studio Art Foundation (SAF) is a basic introduction to artistic practice in contemporary culture. Through an interdisciplinary approach and a technical understanding of multiple mediums, the course crosses borders between two-dimensional, three-dimensional and time based artistic disciplines. Campus wide events (lectures, concerts, exhibitions) are used as points of departure in the class to emphasize the critical nature of art making with other content areas of study, theory and research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Develop creative thinking skills
- Introduction to visual literacy
- Improve perceptive and analytical skills with focus on photography, sculpture, performance, and conceptual art
- Develop craft / making skills in a variety of media
- Understand relationship between form and content - art and its expressive, political, social and cultural implications
- Expand your notion of what art is and can be
- Inspire further research and other creative pursuits

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Come to every class prepared to learn, work, listen, watch, and participate.
- Complete all assignments on time. Students are always permitted, and encouraged, to consider re-doing assignments for which they did not receive a satisfactory grade. A re-do must be completed one week after the unsatisfactory grade. A re-do does not guarantee a higher grade, but it is impossible to receive a lower grade for such efforts.
- Participation in class, constructive response during critiques, and discussion of readings.
- Work hard + Experiment + Take risks + Have fun!

BLACKBOARD

- All assigned projects and readings will be assigned and discussed in class as well as posted (along with pertinent information, deliverables, and due dates) to Blackboard.
- The class schedule will be posted to Blackboard and subject to change. All changes to the posted schedule will be announced in class.
- Grades will be posted to the Blackboard Grade Center.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This is a studio class and much of the work done in this class is done during class time. Attendance is mandatory and crucial to your success. You can miss two classes during the semester, preferably with excused absences. After this, further absences will adversely affect your final grade. Your third absence will lower your final grade by 1/3 letter grade. Every absence after that reduces your grade by another 1/3 letter. You are expected to be physically and mentally present and on time. If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend a particular class, or that you will be late, please leave advance notice with your instructor to register an excused absence. Students are responsible for all missed material. The professor will not provide notes for students for missed classes. Tardy arrivals or early departures, unless authorized by the instructor, count as ½ an absence.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If it would become necessary to cancel a class due to weather or illness, I will contact the Department Secretary who will post a note on the door, as well as alert via email if possible.

ACCOMMODATION

Any student who thinks he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss his or her specific needs. I rely on the Academic Support & Enrichment Center in 102 Doane to verify the need for reasonable accommodations based on documentation on file in that office.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Proposed and developed by Denison students, passed unanimously by DCGA and Denison's faculty, the Code of Academic Integrity requires that instructors notify the Associate Provost of cases of academic dishonesty, and it requires that cases be heard by the Academic Integrity Board. Further, the code makes students responsible for promoting a culture of integrity on campus and acting in instances in which integrity is violated. Academic honesty, the cornerstone of teaching and learning, lays the foundation for lifelong integrity. Academic dishonesty is intellectual theft. It includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the instructor in the creation of work to be submitted for evaluation. This standard applies to all work ranging from daily homework assignments to major exams. Students must clearly cite any sources consulted—not only for quoted phrases but also for ideas and information that are not common knowledge. Neither ignorance nor carelessness is an acceptable defense in cases of plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to follow the appropriate format for citations. Students should ask their instructors for assistance in determining what sorts of materials and assistance are appropriate for assignments and for guidance in citing such materials clearly.

For further information about the Code of Academic Integrity see <http://www.denison.edu/about/integrity.html>**COURSE**

GENERAL GRADING CRITERIA

- A Student works in an independent manner. Willing to try new approaches while working on improving skills. Contributes to classroom critiques and discussions every day. Completes in-class work and brings outside assignments to class on time. Work displays understanding of formal and conceptual/expressive aspects of each project.
- B Works in class. Finishes work and turns in assignments on time. Good understanding of art concepts. Participates in classroom discussions.
- C Completes work with mixed results. Homework and in class projects not in on time. Rarely contributes to classroom discussions.
- D Work often incomplete or missing. Little understanding of art concepts discussed in class. No significant contribution to class critiques. Problems with absences.
- F Student has missing and incomplete work, excess absenteeism, no class contribution.

PROJECT GRADING RUBRIC

Each assignment will be graded using the following rubric. You will be emailed the completed rubric, and the final grade (out of 100) will be entered into the Blackboard Grading Center.

- ___ Followed the Parameter of the Assignment (10 pts)
___ Creativity, Ambition, Risk Taking (20 pts)
___ Formal Qualities: Technique, Craft, Attention to Detail (20 pts)
___ In Class Work (Material Preparation and Efficient Use of Time) (15 pts)
___ Time Management (Outside Class Work between workdays) (15 pts)
___ Presentation (10 pts)
___ Participation in Discussions and Critique (10 pts)
- _____ TOTAL (100 pts)

SEMESTER GRADE BREAKDOWN

Grades will be added to the Blackboard Grading Center throughout the semester and weighted according to the following rubric:

Projects = 80%

- 1: Object Improv (15%)
- 2: Scaled Object (20%)
- 3: Battle of the DIY Bands (20%)
- 4: Do It The Wrong Way (25%)

Art Movements Presentation = 20%

ASSIGNMENTS

Mind Maps + Definitions of Art

*Part 1:

on 18x24" paper, draw a mind map consisting of every experience you can remember that has informed your understanding of what art is or can be. This should be a personal investigation and include only first-hand experiences. This can and should expand beyond just the visual arts... music, theater, dance, popular culture, literature, myth, religious experience, everyday encounters, etc. This does not have to be a beautiful drawing. Just a functional map. [Here are some examples of mind maps.](#) Yours will have "my definition of art" at the center.

*Part 2:

After drawing your mind map, distill it to a 1-2 sentence (working) definition of art. Again, this is your own personal definition, not something taken from the dictionary, wikipedia, etc. We will share these definitions and the mind maps in class on Tuesday (as a discussion, not a critique).

PROJECT 1: OBJECT IMPROV or 1-Minute Sculptures

Challenge:

Inspired by the works of Erwin Wurm and others, you will compose 10 images of 'object improvisation'. This exercise hopefully pushes you to examine the unexpected relationships between everyday objects, the human body, and it's larger environments. These images should question the definition of 'sculpture' with a capital 'S' and how photographic documentation of these fleeting arrangements becomes the work itself. This is an opportunity to allow us (the viewer) to consider conventionally ephemeral material (gestures, temporary surfaces, fleeting environments) as 'permanent' sculptures.

Objective:

Don't labor too much over the planning of these pieces - the idea is to generate spontaneity, creativity, and improvisation. Don't be precious - shoot many more images and ideas - at least twice the number of final images - and pick your final images out of those. Try engaging your analytical brain only after you use the creative brain to loosely generate many ideas. Don't necessarily try to contrive meaning or 'message' while creating the works, rather respond analytically to interpret the images after you have created them.

Materials:

- Camera
 - Tripod
 - Anything and Everything
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PROJECT 2: SCALED OBJECT

Challenge:

Build a recreation of a common object out of cardboard, enlarged to at least 24" (2ft) in one dimension, to exact scale. This means that the proportions of your object must stay the same, but that the dimensions are made larger. Even though your result is an accurate replica of the object, the object it represents will be abstracted and made foreign through the scale shift.

Objective:

This challenge uses your design skills to map a 3-dimensional object onto 2-dimensional space, scale it up, and retranslate it back into 3-dimensions. Through selection and a change in scale and materials your object should be translated into pure form, without conceptual reference. In this project you will also learn the techniques and skills needed for building a detailed object – such as pattern-making, scaling, and basic planar fabrication- and practice ways of organizing work when solving complex problems.

Materials:

- Single-ply cardboard (starting with 4 ft by 8 ft)
- Hot Glue Gun and Glue Sticks
- Paper Tape
- Utility Knife
- Metal T-Square
- Compass
- square
- Chipboard
- 18" x 24" drawing pad

Useful links:

- [Cone Calc](#)

PROCESS:

This project requires a step-by-step procedure

Step 1:

Select a unique and interesting object. Mechanical Objects (can openers, staplers, tools) are especially well suited because they have crisp edges, straight planes, and hard angles. Organic Objects (seed pods, fruit, seashells, etc.) generally have complex curves and thus more difficult to construct. Your object should be large enough to measure parts accurately to 1/8 of an inch.

Step 2:

Make neat working drawings on 18" x 24" pieces of paper from various viewpoints. [Standard engineering blueprint viewpoints are very useful](#) – front, top, side, and isometric. Use a straight-edge ruler. Make sure that the drawings include accurate measurements of **every** dimension. Your finished drawings will be composed of the four different viewpoints: Top, Side, Front, and Isometric.

Step 3:

Determine the scale of your construction. Your finished project should measure no less than 24" in

at least one dimension, however it can be as large as you want. With this in mind, use your drawings to figure out the multiplier you need so that at least one dimension (the longest overall dimension) is 24" or larger. To find the multiplier, divide the final length desired (i.e. 24 inches) by the length of the longest side. That number will be your scale multiplier. You should round up or down in order to have an even number. Then multiply every single dimension on your drawing by that number, and you have the measurements for your construction. It will be much easier to make sense of your blueprint if you write the new, scaled measurement in a different color ink than the original measurement.

Step 4:

Construct your fragment. Complex fragments can often be made with one primary structure combined with smaller additions. Look at your object and break it down into several simple geometric forms (cube, rectangle, trapezoid, cone, sphere etc.) Tabs can be used to fuse two edges. All of the details that are on the original object should be on your construction. There should be no added marks, color, writing, or paint. This project is about craftsmanship and the way in which you disguise and abstract your object. Consider how you want to show your object.

Research Project: Art Movements

For this research project you will be paired, at random, with another student in the class. Your group will be assigned an historical art movement. You will research this art movement, learning all you can about its conceptual framework, the major players (artists, writers, thinkers, etc), and the social and political factors that led to its creation (and place in art history). You will present your findings to the class in a thorough presentation, BUT instead of a typical powerpoint history lesson, you are to communicate the ideas of your art movement through a first-hand experience. For this experience you may decide to take us on a journey, create a work (or works) of art, give a performance, or have us play a game. Consider your "presentation" a work of art in and of itself.

Whatever your ultimate medium of choice, your main objective is to communicate the fundamental concepts behind your art movement. Don't just tell us. Give us a deep understanding of these ideas through personal, first-hand experience. Plan to present for around 45 minutes.

Project 3: BATTLE OF THE DIY BANDS

Bring a found instrument to class- not an instrument in the traditional sense of a flute or a guitar, but instead an object, or combination of objects that makes a sound you find interesting.

Write a one minute song, that includes only your instrument, that you will play for the class. The score for your song must be written, drawn, or presented visually using a method that makes sense to you and that takes into consideration your instrument's capabilities. You will follow this visual score during your one minute performance. You will be graded on the inventiveness of your instrument, performance and your visual/written score.

After hearing each other's instruments you will form into bands and work together to create a sound piece to be played in a "Battle of the Bands" competition. Again you will create and follow a visual score. A panel of guest judges will provide final critique and select the winning band. Prizes will be awarded.

DO IT THE WRONG WAY

'It isn't so much that he likes doing things the hard way: Eno actually enjoys approaching tasks the wrong way. "I'm interested in making things with the wrong people or the wrong tools," he says, with a steady glint in his pale eyes. He explains that for his own forthcoming solo album he is trying to conduct a 16-piece orchestra - "the first lot of string players I've met who I thought were vaguely human" - using no sheet music and a set of hand signals of his own invention. He points to the slightly untidy-looking wall of the terrace in the garden outside and recalls its construction. "I got two guys who had never laid a brick in their lives before and told them to be as careful as they could."

Why bother? "Because that way you get the most interesting results. I think it's significant that three of the most important guitar players in popular music had serious problems. Les Paul damaged his hand in a car accident, Django Reinhardt had only two fingers on his left hand, and Jimi Hendrix, who was left-handed, played a right-handed guitar upside down. So the controls were the first things he hit, and it's very clear in his playing that he thought of it primarily as a piece of electronics rather than, as everybody else had up till then, as a loud acoustic guitar." '

Brian Eno, talking to the late Robert Sandall back in 1990 for Q Magazine.

PART 1

Investigate the structures and systems of your own life. Break/remake your own rules! I.e. your morning routine, how you get dressed, how you tell time, how you communicate with friends, how you interact with strangers, how/what you eat, etc. Do 10 things wrong in one day. This should consist of 9 small actions and 1 day-long activity.

PART 2

How can you turn the process of doing something the wrong way (using the wrong tools, the wrong people, etc.) into an interesting work of art? Inspired by the artist lecture and your own experience of doing 10 things wrong in a day, create a work (in any medium) that explore these ideas. This project is not about breaking the law, but instead about how you might discover something new and interesting by approaching something ordinary from a new/alternate perspective.